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PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS OF CONGREGATIONALISM.

THAT the germ of Congregationalism is found in the New Testament, can be believed, without supposing that this particular system of church polity, or any other, was fully developed in all its parts during the life-time of the apostles; without even supposing that this, or any other, was intended to be made a distinct subject of divine legislation. It should be sufficient authority for any ecclesiastical usage, if the principles of the gospel, carried into consistent practice amid all the circumstances which Providence has arranged, shall naturally and necessarily bring in that usage. Hence the manner in which Congregationalism took its rise in New England, renders it sufficiently divine.

Its beginnings are thus set forth by Dr. Cotton Mather in his historical notes on the Cambridge Platform. "The churches of New England, enjoying so much rest and growth as they had now seen for some sevens of years, it was, upon many accounts, necessary for them to make such a declaration of the church order, wherein the good hand of God had moulded them, as might convey and secure the like order unto the following generations. Next unto the Bible, which was the professed, perpetual and only directory of these churches, they had no platform of church government more exact than their famous John Cotton's well known book of 'The Keyes.'"

This language is intelligible; and the idea, beautiful. A company of conscientious Christians, — fleeing from an oppressive hierarchy because it hinders the development of pure Christianity, making the wilderness their home because it affords them

“freedom to worship God,” selecting their own religious teachers by popular vote, and these teachers taking the Bible as their “professed, perpetual and only directory” in the administration of their affairs,—commence their career in this secluded spot, far from all other restraint than that which Christ, their acknowledged Sovereign, imposes. In these untrammelled circumstances, each body of believers assumes its own independent form;—a form, which, owing to a similarity of sentiment and condition, will be very likely to have a sameness in its essential features, with considerable variety in its minor details. At length, in 1648, they come together, not to enact a code of ecclesiastical laws, not even to construct an original system of church polity; but simply to compare notes and usages, and commit to writing that system which had already sprung into use among them, and thus make “a declaration of the church order wherein the good hand of God had moulded them.”

The declaration thus made was the Cambridge Platform, which has ever since been regarded as the ground-plan of New England Congregationalism. And when it is considered that this system of ecclesiastical polity was not concocted by any one man, nor body of men, but is simply a transcript of the usages, “a declaration of the church order,” which sprung up spontaneously among an intelligent, devout, and conscientious fraternity of churches, who had as yet no denominational preferences to consult, who went to the Scriptures for *all* their rules, even in the minutest affairs of life, it will be seen in what high sense it claims to be divinely authorized, and on what strong grounds it rests that claim. Coming up in this way, it gives incomparably better evidence of its being from God, than if it had been devised and decreed by the wisest council of bishops that Christendom ever saw.

The whole number of churches in Massachusetts at the time this Synod met at Cambridge, in 1648, was thirty-nine. If to these be added four others gathered in Connecticut, three in New Hampshire, and one Baptist church in Rhode Island, we have the entire ecclesiastical map of New England, twenty-seven years after the landing at Plymouth, and seventeen after the settlement of Boston. It exhibits forty-six Congregational churches, gathered from a population of something less than thirty thousand, or one distinct church organization and place of worship for every six hundred and fifty souls. Were we estimating their supply of

religious instruction as well as their progress in church extension, it would be important to observe that most of these churches were supplied with two ministers each; a custom which gradually went out of use; till, in our day, the support of only *one* is deemed too burdensome by many a parish which would have ranked among the ablest in those Puritan times.

But it is only the rise and progress of the churches, which we propose to consider in this article. And here, at the outset of our inquiries, we encounter a fact, as deplorable as it is embarrassing. Many of the churches, founded by the Pilgrim Fathers, and which stood forth for a long time, (some of them for more than a century and a half,) the champions and defenders of the Pilgrim faith, while they still adhere to their original system of ecclesiastical polity, have renounced that faith. Thirteen out of the thirty-nine whose pastors and delegates framed the Cambridge Platform, belong to this class; to which five more must be added, if we adopt the decision of our civil courts, and consider the identity of the church as inhering in the parish. Their names are expunged from the present list of evangelical churches. But they cannot be blotted from the past. They still have a "record on high." And yet this feature in the history of New England Congregationalism imposes the necessity of applying the rule of subtraction, as well as addition, in following the progress of our denomination through the past to the present.

We have endeavored to form a list of the Congregational churches of Massachusetts, both Trinitarian and Unitarian, arranged in the chronological order of their organization, — a labor which cannot be performed in a day, or even a year, inasmuch as the materials from which to construct such a list are to be sought for, not so much in books, as in the unpublished records of the churches. And what makes the subject still more perplexing is, that these records are oftentimes defective. However, by keeping the inquiry alive through a series of years, and embracing all favorable opportunities for getting the facts, we have been able to assign a date to the origin of each, with a reasonable degree of accuracy. From an inspection of this list, the following results are derived.

The whole number of Congregational churches which have been gathered in the State, from the beginning to the present time, is six hundred and thirty-three. Of these, thirty have either become

tion of Evangelical churches, which, in their organized capacity, had seceded from the parishes with which they had been connected. In all such cases, our courts of law persist in declaring the residuum to be the original church, — a declaration which our common sense persists in denying. As we view the matter, a church is a voluntary association, recognized in law under a general statute of incorporation. Now it is a plain principle of common law, that every voluntary association may prescribe its own terms of membership, and can only have a permanent existence by a succession of members duly admitted according to rule. The records of the church alone can tell of whom it is composed. Properly speaking, these twenty-five cases are parishes turned Unitarian; and usually, though not always, associated with a Unitarian church constituted in place of the original church which had withdrawn. In these cases we have given to the seceding church the original date, and assumed that the parochial church had no existence previous to the secession. This we hold to be the only truthful view of the subject.

If, now, from the one hundred and sixty-four Unitarian churches in this State, we subtract the ninety that were once Trinitarian, there will remain but seventy-four that were originally founded on that faith. If we accept the decision of the judges, and concede what Unitarians claim respecting those twenty-five others, there will be but forty-nine churches in all the State, *planted* by Unitarian enterprise; and five hundred and fifty-four, or more than eleven out of twelve, gathered originally by the zeal of the Orthodox.

But in order to obtain a just, or even an impartial, view of the progress of Congregationalism, it is needful, not only to compute its absolute growth through successive periods, but also to compare it with the growth of other denominations during the same time. By omitting to do this, almost any denomination of Christians, in this growing country, can find evidence that it is destined to out-number and over-top every other. And yet, through lack of reliable statistics, it is extremely difficult to trace this comparative progress. Along the misty track of the past, there are but a few points, where sufficient light can be found, to admit of a comparison between the different denominations, even in Massachusetts.

The following facts, however, have been verified. Up to 1664 there was no church organization in the State, except the Congregational; unless we make a distinction which the fathers of that

day were not accustomed to make, between a few which had the elements of Presbyterianism in their structure, and the mass of them, which had not. This exception, however, applies rather to a few *ministers* Presbyterially inclined, than to the churches under their care. There does not appear to have been a regular Presbyterian church gathered in Massachusetts, prior to 1727, when the present Federal Street Church, Boston, was organized in that form. The largest number in the State, at any one time, has been five; which is now reduced to two. As these are scarcely distinguishable from the others in doctrine or religious fellowship, they are here included in the Congregational fraternity. Whatever New England owes, therefore, to the ecclesiastical influences under which her character was formed and her institutions founded during the first forty-four years from her birth, she owes to Congregationalism exclusively. Beginning at this point, the order of time in which the other religious denominations took their origin, may be stated thus:—The first Baptist church in Boston, which was also the first in Massachusetts, was gathered in 1664. The first Episcopal church was organized in 1686, and is known among us now as the King's Chapel Church, in this city. It is also a fact, suggestive of reflection, that it was the first on the continent to become Unitarian. The Friends, or Quakers, arose in 1710. The first Universalist organization was effected in 1786. The Roman Catholics opened their first place of worship, in 1789. The Methodists began in 1795. Unitarian societies were not publicly known as such, in Massachusetts, prior to 1810, with the single exception of the King's Chapel congregation, which excluded the doctrine of the Trinity from their Liturgy, in 1785.

We have found means for comparing the number of churches in the several denominations, at four different periods in the past.

In 1696, which was seventy-six years after the landing at Plymouth, the churches in Massachusetts were, one Episcopalian, one Baptist, and seventy-four Congregationalist. There was also a congregation of French Refugees, in Boston, who had a place of worship in School Street, which was subsequently occupied by Rev. Andrew Croswell's congregation, till his death, and then went into the hands of the first Roman Catholic congregation.

In 1767, after a hundred and forty-seven years, the Episcopalians numbered ten assemblies; the Friends, thirteen; the Baptists, sixteen; the Congregationalists, two hundred and eighty.

Twenty-three years later, in 1790, the Roman Catholics had one church; the Universalists, one; the Friends, six; the Episcopalians, eleven; the Baptists, eighty-three; the Congregationalists, three hundred and thirty-two.

At the beginning of this century, the Roman Catholics were still but one; the Universalists, four; the Friends, eight; the Episcopalians, fourteen; the Methodists, twenty-nine; the Baptists, ninety-three; the Congregationalists, three hundred and fifty-two.

The present number of churches connected with the several denominations, is estimated thus:—Freewill Baptists, seven; Swedenborgians, ten; Friends, fourteen; Christians, thirty; Episcopalians, fifty-five; Roman Catholics, fifty-eight; Universalists, one hundred and forty-five; Unitarians, one hundred and sixty-four; Methodists, one hundred and eighty-one; Baptists, two hundred and thirty-three; Congregationalists, four hundred and thirty-nine; in all, one thousand three hundred and thirty-six. From this, it appears that the Orthodox Congregationalist churches comprise about one third of all the churches in Massachusetts; the Baptists, one sixth; the Methodists, one seventh; the Unitarians, one eighth; the Universalists, one ninth; the Roman Catholics, one twenty-third; and the Episcopalians, one twenty-fifth.

Having given the ecclesiastical statistics of Massachusetts, in rather tedious detail, we shall merely glance at the progress which Congregationalism has made in other parts of the land. It has already been noticed that there were forty-six Congregational churches in New England, when the Synod of 1648 met at Cambridge. In 1696, when the number of these churches in Massachusetts was seventy-four, there were in Connecticut thirty-six; in New Hampshire, five; and in the Province of Maine, three;—the whole number in New England being at that time one hundred and eighteen. In 1760, these had increased to four hundred and eighty-three, viz:—in Massachusetts, two hundred and sixty; in Connecticut, one hundred and fifty-three; in New Hampshire, forty; in Maine, twenty; in Rhode Island, ten; and were doubling about once in thirty years, as President Stiles calculates in his Election Sermon, preached at that date. The present number within the limits of New England, is not far from one thousand two hundred and seventy. This estimate, of course, includes only the evangelical.

Congregationalism, in this country, was hardly known out of New England, prior to 1800 ; and then, for twenty-five years, it was not generally recognized as any thing distinct from Presbyterianism, with which, in fact, it became so harmoniously affiliated, that New England Congregationalists, in their emigrations to the West, felt little desire to transport their ecclesiastical *name*, the thing itself, which that name signified, being made, as they deemed, sufficiently sure. For reasons, however, which need not be stated here, there has been, for the last fifteen or twenty years, a stronger development of the distinctive features of Congregationalism, in this class of churches, and a greater partiality for the name, insomuch that there are already not less than three hundred and twenty-five unmixed Congregational churches, in the Middle and Western States ; which, added to those of New England, make the whole number in the United States, one thousand five hundred and ninety-five, or, in round numbers, one thousand six hundred. It has been estimated, with how much accuracy we are unable to say, that the Congregational churches in England are one thousand eight hundred and fifty-three ; in Wales, four hundred and sixty-three ; in Scotland, one hundred and three ; in Ireland, twenty-four ; and in the British Provinces, seventy-eight ; in all, two thousand five hundred and twenty-one ; which, added to those in the United States, make the total number in Great Britain and America, something over four thousand.

As to the prospects of Congregationalism in this country, there appears to be no good reason to fear that the predictions concerning its speedy extinction, which have been uttered against it, ever since its first establishment, will have a fulfilment in our day. It never extended *farther* than at present, and was never extending *faster*. There are some developments of the age, which seem peculiarly favorable to its future progress. The democracy of our civil government, which, instead of fading out, becomes more strongly marked, every year, is cognate with the essential and distinctive feature of our ecclesiastical polity. Modern Republicanism and modern Congregationalism, were thrown up together, from among those deep things of God and his government, which were brought to light by means of the Puritans. It is but reasonable, therefore, to look for a correspondence in their several manifestations. And at what time since the beginning of the seventeenth

century, have the masses of human mind been more impatient of political authority, or judicatorial restraint, in matters pertaining to the church, than at the present moment? The mutations and permutations through which the Presbyterian and Episcopal bodies are passing, especially when we take into view the source of these commotions, have a tendency in the same general direction. Causes may, indeed, be set at work, which shall prevent these elements of Congregationalism from assuming an organic form, or, at least, from crystalizing around this nucleus of ours. We may become so exclusive as to impose upon ourselves a law of non-intercourse with those who already hold every essential of Congregationalism, but the *name*. Or we may become so liberal and sympathizing, as to fraternize with all who have the *name*, though they hold scarce any thing else in common with us. Should none of these things come to pass, there is reason to believe that this simple and scriptural method of church government will have a wide extension, and be found equally well suited to the condition of any people, who are blessed with common education and common sense.

MORAL COURAGE.

THERE is a clear distinction between moral courage and courage that is purely constitutional. But in the characters of men in real life, the constitutional and the moral elements of courage co-exist, and blend with each other in an infinite variety of proportions. And it is highly interesting and instructive to notice the mutual modifications which they give and receive.

Moral courage is sometimes combined with such natural propensities as firmness and self-reliance; and these propensities enhance its perfection, so far as they are brought under the control of moral and religious principle. Thus you have the character for a reformer. Such was the courage of Paul. It was natural to the man. He was a daring persecutor, before he became a fearless apostle. His conversion gave his courage a better direction. It may have increased it. It doubtless did impart to it a divine strength and inflexibility in some things; while in others, it softened and subdued his impetuous spirit. But his courage

was not an entirely new element implanted in him at his conversion. It was given him by the God of nature, and then chosen and appropriated by the God of grace, as a fit instrument for battering down the strong holds of pagan superstition and Jewish unbelief. It is a beautiful spectacle to see this same apostle preaching the gospel in defiance of pains and penalties, reasoning of righteousness, continence and a judgment to come before unrighteous and licentious rulers, till they trembled, and even withstanding a brother apostle to his face because he was ready to sacrifice a principle to convenience. Yet, where no principle was involved, he became all things to all men, that by all means he might save some.

Luther, also, was constitutionally courageous. He would have been a fanatical monk, or fiery cardinal, or persecuting pope, if he had not been a bold reformer. He would have fought and conquered something else, if he had not fought and conquered Rome. This native and indomitable courage was quite essential to the accomplishment of his apparently hopeless mission. And it is wonderful how far it was reduced to the sway of reason and religion. With all his native fire, Luther was the friend of order and of peace. The demons of fanaticism and of war were let loose upon Germany only after his death. At the same time, this fiery temper had its dangers, and led to some dire results. It made him impatient of control. It well nigh alienated him from his best friend and ablest coadjutor, the learned and gentle Melanchthon. It occasioned that unhappy breach between himself and the Swiss reformers, between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, which, beyond all others, is *the* reason, why the Protestant faith, has not long ere this overspread the whole of Christendom.

Melanchthon, on the other hand, was constitutionally deficient in courage. He was naturally cautious and timid. No moral culture or influence could make him like Luther. And yet his fervent love of truth and his high sense of duty fitted him to be a champion of the Protestant cause scarcely less strenuous in the defence of fundamental principles, and no less essential to the ultimate success of the reformation, than Luther himself. Luther had more courage to assail error; but Melanchthon had no less fortitude to suffer, if need be, for the truth. Luther was the more ready to carry the war into the enemy's country; but Melanchthon would have died, rather than desert his post. He

was just fitted to hold the helm, while Luther rowed the vessel of reform. If Luther was disposed to pull out into the stormy deep, and if Melanchthon was too much inclined to brush the shoals, yet one was as little disposed as the other to return to the pestilential shores they were leaving. Between them both, the gallant bark, aided also by the favoring gales of divine Providence, was brought safely into the desired haven. History and public opinion seldom render to such men their dues. D'Aubigne, with all his candor and all his sympathy with moral excellence, has not done justice to the high moral worth of Melanchthon. Luther is the hero of his history; and he draws such a picture of Melanchthon, especially at the Diet of Augsburg, that the reader cannot help despising him for his pusillanimity. We have not the least doubt, that the whole truth properly stated would leave a very different impression.* It cost Luther no struggle to battle it with the enemy. Melanchthon had fears within, whenever there were fightings without; yet he contended earnestly for the faith. There was the triumph of moral principle. There was moral courage in its utmost purity, if not in its highest perfection.

Whoever would see an example of constitutional courage destitute of the moral element, may find it in Henry VIII. of England. With an enormous development of pride and obstinacy, he shook off the allegiance of the Pope, that he might be pope himself, and have full license for the gratification of his unbridled passions. As arbitrary as he was selfish, he burned Papists and hanged Protestants, with an impartiality equalled only by his self-complacency. He teaches us how little reason we have to pride ourselves on the mere results of our actions, and how little they sometimes correspond with the moral character of the actions themselves. Providence raised up this unprincipled and tyrannical king to be a great reformer, and to confer lasting and incalculable benefits on England and the world.

Queen Elizabeth also was her father's own daughter. She held the etiquette of her court as sacred as the majesty of her person, and she would quite as soon have dispensed with the authority of the decalogue, as with the wearing of a surplice or the observance of a prescribed ceremony. And yet, so far beyond her most sanguine hopes has her spiritual despotism extended,

* See an excellent article on Melanchthon, by Prof. Edwards, in the *Bibliotheca* for May, 1846.

the caprice of this female pope gave its entire shape and complexion to that modern synagogue, which claims for its bishops and its sacraments the unearthly prerogative of being the exclusive channel of all apostolic and christian benedictions to mankind! It becomes us to trust and honor Providence in all its mysterious ways. But history should teach us to beware how we canonize the instruments of Providence, unless we see in them some higher elements than mere constitutional courage or natural hardihood, — even the higher elements of wisdom and goodness, of truth and love.

PRESIDENT QUINCY'S MISSTATEMENTS EXPOSED AND CORRECTED.

NO. V.

WE will now sum up President Quincy's objections against Cotton Mather. He represents Mather as possessing decidedly a *bad character*; as forfeiting his reputation and influence with the community; and as becoming "the object of public ridicule and open insult." In the excitement respecting witchcraft, says President Quincy, he was "headlong, zealous, and fearless, both as to character and consequences." P. 62. He was a man of "malign" and "vehement passions," of "violent," "never sleeping animosity," and of a "self-glorifying spirit," who would "resort to underhand measures to gratify himself." Pp. 137—237. He was characterized by "violence of passion, frequent coarseness of language, and deficiency of judgment, to a degree, at times, scarcely reconcilable with common sense." P. 330. His spirit "was restless, violent, selfish, and passionate; craving distinction and claiming it, by every form of self-illustration and display." P. 344. Through the medium of this history, "Cotton Mather must be transmitted, as an individual of ungovernable passions, and of questionable principles; credulous, intriguing, and vindictive; often selfish as to his ends, at times little scrupulous in the use of means; wayward, aspiring and vain; rendering his piety dubious by display, and the motives of his public services suspected, by the obtrusiveness of his claims to honor and place; whose fanaticism, if not ambition, gave such a public

encouragement to the belief in the agencies of the invisible world, as to have been one of the chief causes of the widest spread misery and disgrace, to which his country was ever subjected." P. 346. In fine, President Quincy says Cotton Mather "disgusted his contemporaries," and "became the frequent subject of ridicule and derision." P. 345.

We have grouped these quotations together, for the purpose of exhibiting, in one view, the abusive epithets, and the calumnious representations, which President Quincy has heaped upon the ashes of the once venerable Mather. Our refutation of them will be short and effectual.

In proof of the charge, that Cotton Mather, before his death, "became the frequent subject of ridicule and derision," reference is made, not to any thing of which the public had knowledge, but to the private writings of Mather; which, in the latter part of his life, were penned often in seasons of severe domestic affliction, and what is more, under the influence of disease, accompanied by deep mental depression, which led him to suspect insult, where none was intended, and to construe every thing pertaining to himself in the most unfavorable light. That he really had forfeited his reputation, is refuted by what President Quincy himself says of him, in the year 1724, — the very time when Mather was led to record in his diary, the severest things against himself. Speaking of him, in connexion with Rev. Joseph Sewall, President Quincy says: "At that time, they were held in high esteem by the Calvinistic party;" — and there was then no other party. P. 329. It was at this time, that he was a prominent candidate for the presidency of Harvard College, when, as Dr. Eliot remarks: "The voice of the people cried aloud for Dr. Mather; and it was declared, even in the general court, that he *ought* to be president."

But the most perfect refutation of the whole catalogue of charges now before us, is found in the general mourning occasioned by Dr. Mather's death, which occurred in the winter of 1728; in the circumstances of his funeral; and in the many testimonies to the high excellencies of his character, which were given at the time. "He was followed to his grave," says Mr. Peabody, "by an immense procession, including the lieutenant governor, the honorable council, the representatives, and all the high officers of the province." "The streets," says Dr.

Eliot, "were crowded with people, and the windows filled with sorrowful spectators, all the way to the grave." "It was the general sentiment that a great man had fallen." The mourning was compared, by one of the ministers, to the mourning of the children of Israel, on the death of Aaron. Funeral sermons were preached for him in most of the churches in Boston; where his brethren in the ministry stood up in the midst of those among whom he was born, with whom he had always lived, and who were well acquainted both with his weaknesses and excellencies, and gave his character, in the terms and manner following:

"Thus lived and died Dr. Mather," said Mr. Thatcher, "the glory of learning, and the ornament of Christianity."

"The capacity of his mind," said Rev. Mr. Gee, "the readiness of his wit, the vastness of his reading, the strength of his memory, the variety and treasures of his learning, in printed works and in manuscript; the splendor of virtue which, through the abundant grace of God, shone out in the tenor of a most entertaining and profitable conversation; his uncommon activity, his unwearied application, his extensive zeal and numberless projects of doing good;—these things, as they were united in him, proclaimed him to be a truly extraordinary person."

"One of the most elegant compositions of those times," says Eliot, "was a funeral sermon upon Dr. Cotton Mather, by Dr. Benjamin Colman," a great favorite with President Quincy. In this sermon, Dr. Colman said: "We mourn the decease from us,—not his ascension to God,—of *the first minister of the town*;—the first in age, in gifts, and in grace, as all his brethren very readily own. I might add, it may be without offence, *the first in the whole province, and provinces of New England*, for universal literature and extensive services. Yea, it may be, among all the fathers in these churches, from the beginning of the country to this day,—of whom many have done worthily and greatly,—yet, none of them amassed together so vast a treasure of learning, and made so much use of it to a variety of pious intentions, as this our Reverend Brother and Father, Dr. Cotton Mather." "His printed works will not convey to posterity, nor give to strangers, a just idea of the real worth and great learning of the man. His works will, indeed, inform all that read them of his great knowledge, and singular piety, his zeal for God, and holiness, and truth, and his desire of the salvation of precious

souls. But it was conversation, and acquaintance with him in his familiar and occasional discourses and private communications, that discovered the vast compass of his knowledge, and the projections of his piety, more, I have sometimes thought, than all his pulpit exercises. Here he excelled; here he shone; being exceedingly communicative, and bringing out of his treasure things new and old, without measure. Here it was seen, how his wit and fancy, his invention, his quickness of thought and ready apprehension, were all consecrated to God, as well as his heart, will and affections; and out of the abundance within, his lips overflowed, dropped as the honey-comb, fed all that came near him, and were as the choice silver, for richness and brightness, for pleasure and profit."

The Rev. Mr. Prince, after quoting the foregoing passages from Colman, adds: "Every one who intimately knew Dr. Mather, will readily subscribe to the above description. By his learned works and correspondence, those who lived at the greatest distance might discover much of his superior light and influence; but they could discern these only by a more mediate and faint reflection. They could neither see, nor well imagine, that extraordinary lustre of pious and useful literature, wherewith *we* were every day entertained, surprised, and satisfied, who dwelt in the directer rays, the more immediate vision.

"Great abilities, an insatiable thirst for all kinds of knowledge, an extraordinary quickness of apprehension, liveliness of fancy, with a ready invention and active spirit, — these seemed to be the chief ingredients of his natural genius. And all these being sanctified in his early days, endued with a divine bias, and turned to the noblest objects, he became inflamed with the most ardent desires to amass unto himself, from all sorts of writings, an unbounded treasure of curious and useful learning, and to find out all imaginable ways of employing it, for the glory of God, the good of men, and the advancement of his own perfection; that as he grew in knowledge, he might increase in goodness and usefulness, and become a greater and more extensive blessing.

"So much erudition, such high degrees of piety, and such an active life in doing good, united in the same person, are very rarely seen among the sons of men. By a transient acquaintance with him, one would think that, being sanctified from the birth, he had made the utmost improvement of his time in the pursuit of

knowledge. But upon a further view of the social part of his life, the continued resort of visitors, with his gentle and easy entertainment of them at all hours, and how he would scarce let the meanest or youngest pass him without instruction; it would seem as if almost all his time were swallowed up with *conversation.* And yet, being let into a more intimate discovery of his numberless and perpetual contrivances and labors to do good in the world, one would then be ready to conclude that he could have no time left for either, but must have spent it all in *action.* I cannot think to wish a richer blessing, than that the God of the spirits of all flesh would, in my own dear country, and in every other, raise up numbers of such ministers as this, that they may burn and shine, as he, and prepare the world for the most illustrious appearance of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ."*

In an obituary notice of Cotton Mather, published in the Boston News Letter, he is described as "*the principal ornament of his country, and the greatest scholar that was ever bred in it.* Besides; his universal learning, his exalted piety and extensive charity, his entertaining wit and singular goodness of temper, recommended him to all, who were judges of real and distinguished merit."

Such, then, was the man, in the estimation of those among whom he lived and died, who, by President Quincy and others in this nineteenth century, is represented as possessing the most odious traits of intellectual and moral character, the worst features both of mind and heart;—who is declared to have forfeited all consideration and influence in the community. Our readers must judge between the *contemporaries* of Mather, and his modern *translators.* Which had the opportunity to know him best? Which must be regarded as the most competent to judge of his talents, his learning, his piety, his usefulness, and his moral worth?

President Quincy admits that the contemporaries of Mather attempted "to draw a veil over his failures," "wherewith to cover his defects and infirmities;" but "time," he says, "has lifted that veil, and thrust aside that mantle, which the tenderness of friends and professional interest desired to spread." Our readers will judge, however, whether the funeral and mourning above described, and the testimonies *spontaneously* given, are not some-

* See Preface to the Life of Cotton Mather, by Rev. Thomas Prince.

thing more than an effort to draw a veil over infirmities and defects ; — whether they are not evidence, full and decisive, as to the estimation in which Cotton Mather was held by the Bostonians of that day. It deserves consideration, too, whether it is indeed *time* that has lifted the veil, and thrust aside the mantle, of which President Quincy speaks, or whether this mantle has not been torn aside by rude, officious and prejudiced hands, to be replaced, in due course of time, with brighter colors, and in smoother folds.

The question has often suggested itself, in the progress of this discussion : Why have the Mathers received so much harder treatment, at the hands of President Quincy, than some of their contemporaries ? Why is every opportunity taken, to set off the characters of such men as Colman, and Pemberton, and Brattle, and Appleton, to the best possible advantage ; while no opportunities seem to have been lost, and no epithets spared, to blacken and injure the characters of Increase and Cotton Mather ? Why are the good qualities and deeds of such men as Dudley, and Stoughton, and Leverett, and the elder Sewall emblazoned, and their errors either passed over, or touched with a soft and delicate hand ; * while the private letters and diaries of the Mathers are sifted, and their very ashes raked, in eager quest for occasion of reproach ?

This remarkable difference of treatment is not to be accounted for, on the ground that the Mathers were *Calvinists*, and the others not ; or that the Mathers were *stricter* Calvinists than most of the distinguished men of their times. One would naturally suppose that this was the fact, from reading the pages of President Quincy. He has much to say respecting “the strict Calvinists,” “the rigid Calvinists,” “the Calvinistic party ;” and almost all the disturbances of the college, and mischiefs of the times, are laid to their account. Indeed, he states expressly, that the Brattles, and Leverett, and Pemberton, and Colman, “were *not* adherents to the

* Stoughton was more directly responsible than any other individual for the blood of those who were executed for witchcraft. He presided on the bench when they were tried, passed sentence upon them, and persisted in admitting “the spectral evidence,” in opposition to the remonstrances of the Mathers, and of nearly all the ministers. Yet the Mathers have been made to bear the blame of this bloody business, while Stoughton has escaped almost without reproach !

rigid doctrines of the early established churches of New England." P. 127. But on this point he is certainly and greatly mistaken. There were no professed dissenters from Calvinistic doctrines among the Congregationalists in those times, and the distinction between strict and moderate Calvinists was scarcely known. The ministers and churches were all of them Calvinistic. They all received the Westminster Confession of Faith, or what was called the New England Confession, adopted in 1680, which is substantially the same thing. The Brattle Street Church in Boston was as strictly Calvinistic in profession, as the North Church. In the "Manifesto," which its founders published, they say, "First of all, we *approve* and *subscribe* the Confession of Faith put forth by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster." *

The elder Pemberton was a very strict Calvinist, as all may see, who will take the trouble to look into his sermons. Dr. Colman, the first pastor of the Brattle Street Church, and one of the leaders of President Quincy's "moderate party," was not only a Calvinist, but a stickler for the peculiarities of Calvinistic doctrine. He was the early and fast friend of the celebrated George Whitefield. In the year 1714, he wrote a letter to Rev. Mr. Adams of New London, entreating him to inquire "concerning the bruit of the prevalence of Arminianism in Yale College," and "to vindicate the college, if possible, from the aspersion." † A good comment this on the pretence of President Quincy, that Yale College was got up by "the strict Calvinists," when they could no longer control affairs at Harvard. That Leverett was a Calvinist is certain from the fact that his election to the presidency was approved by so many of the Calvinistic ministers of the province. ‡ Also from the fact, that such works as the Assembly's Catechism, Wollebius's Theology, and Ames's Medulla, were constantly studied and recited as text-books, under his direction, during the whole period of his presidency. P. 144.

* Thomas Brattle was one of the founders and original members of this church. Hence, he was either a *Calvinist* or a *hypocrite*. Dr. Holmes testifies that "Dr. Appleton, like *all* his predecessors" — among whom was Rev. William Brattle — "were *Calvinists*." Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. iii. P. 62.

† See Turell's Life of Colman, P. 69.

‡ Thirty-nine of these ministers expressed their approbation in writing. See Vol. i. P. 504.

The Rev. Mr. Prince informs us, that when he returned from Europe, in the year 1717, the eight ministers of Boston, including Dr. Colman by name, "were all most happily agreeing in the doctrines of grace, as laid down in the Catechisms and Confession of the venerable Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as well as the Confession of Faith agreed to by our New England Synods, which is almost the same as the other." *

Speaking of the state of affairs in New England in the first half of the last century, the Christian Examiner says: "An immense majority of the New England churches and ministers were *Calvinists* — *strict Calvinists*; and the Trinity had never been impugned in the provinces." Vol. iv. P. 492.

It follows from these statements, that the distinction among ministers in and around Boston, into Calvinists and others, or into strict and moderate Calvinists, in the times of which we speak, — a distinction so much insisted on by President Quincy, — *is without foundation. There is no such distinction.* The discussions of that day turned scarcely at all on points of doctrine. They related rather to questions of ecclesiastical order and usage. Of course, the ground of President Quincy's peculiar treatment of the Mathers cannot be, that they were more decidedly or strictly Calvinists, than their brethren generally. Neither can it be, that their views of church government were, on the whole, more obnoxious. The Mathers were old fashioned Congregationalists, clinging to the rights and the independence of particular churches, and resisting all encroachments on the provisions of the Cambridge Platform. But Dr. Colman was more of a Presbyterian than Congregationalist. He was ordained by the Presbytery in London, and he says, in one of his latest letters: "I have always openly avowed myself somewhat of a Presbyterian, under our Congregational forms." †

Nor can we account for President Quincy's hostility to the Mathers, on the ground that they were less catholic and liberal in their feelings than their brethren generally. Of Increase Mather it is said by his son: "He had learned the utter nonsense and folly of attempting to convert men with penalties. He saw that the man who is a good neighbor, and a good subject, has a right

* Christian History, Vol. ii. P. 374.

† Life of Dr. Colman, P. 107.

to his life and the comforts of it; and that it is *not his being of this or that opinion in religion, but his doing something which directly tends to the hurt of human society*, by which this right can be forfeited. He saw that until persecution be utterly banished out of the world, and Cain's club be taken out of Abel's hand, as well as out of Cain's, it is impossible to rescue the world from endless confusions." *

The opinions of Cotton Mather on this subject were similar to those of his father. In one of his published discourses, the younger Mather says: "In this city of Boston, there are ten assemblies of Christians of different persuasions, who live in so loving and peaceable a manner, as may give a sensible rebuke to all the bigots of uniformity, and show them how consistent a variety of rites in religion may be with the tranquillity of human society; and may demonstrate to the world that persecution for conscientious dissents in religion is an *abomination of desolation*, — a thing whereof all wise and just men will say, 'cursed be its anger, for it is fierce, and its wrath, for it is cruel.' " † It would be difficult to find more decisive testimonies in favor of religious liberty, in any writer, or period, or language in the world.

Nor can it be the ground of President Quincy's peculiar treatment of the Mathers, that they were chargeable with greater faults or foibles than their contemporaries generally. That they were perfect men is not pretended. And that the younger Mather took no great pains to conceal his foibles, is also true. But were they not, on the whole, as free from imperfection as most of the distinguished men around them; and much more so than many, who come under the notice of President Quincy, and escape without censure? But we refrain from the thankless task of uncovering the ashes of those who have passed that bourne at which, as our author says, "envy usually withdraws from its victim, and hatred listens to the suggestions of humanity." Would that he had kept this passage in mind while writing some parts of his defamatory history.

For the peculiar hostility of President Quincy, and some other Unitarian writers, against the Mathers, the following reasons appear to be the most probable.

* Remarkables, &c., P. 58.

† In Graham's Hist. Vol. i. P. 288.

1. Their piety was of a high order, and they were more truly spiritual and devout men, than most of their contemporaries. Their preaching was in "demonstration of the Spirit, and with power." Their standard of Christian character was elevated. Their holy living was to many, both a reproof and a restraint. This raised them up enemies in their own time, who watched for their halting, who magnified and trumpeted their imperfections, and the influence of whose reproaches has not yet passed away.

2. They were called, in divine providence, to stand in the breach, when those innovations on New England usages commenced, which have since resulted in the apostacy of so many of the churches of the Pilgrims. When the separate, independent action of the churches in the election of their ministers began to be denied, and the right of examining candidates for admission to the churches, was first assailed, it devolved on the Mathers to stand up and oppose what they regarded, and what all evangelical Christians now regard, as alarming innovations. This is one of the things for which they cannot be forgiven.

3. Another cause of hostility, is the position which the Mathers felt constrained to assume, at least for a time, with respect to Harvard College. Their affectionate regard and veneration for the college, they had previously exhibited, in a thousand ways. But when, at length, it fell under the control of what were called, in those times, "the Manifesto Men,"* — the promoters of the innovations spoken of above, — the Mathers felt obliged to stand comparatively aloof. Not that they opposed the college, or withdrew from it all their former regard and patronage. Cotton Mather, in a letter to President Leverett, says: — "It is a satisfaction that I can reckon sixteen or seventeen of the sons of the church whereof I am servant, who belong, at this time, unto the college." But they were suspicious as to its influence, and complained of its government, perhaps, more than they ought. It cannot be doubted, however, that their intentions were pure, and that they acted conscientiously. Nor can it be doubted that their exertions were, in a good degree, successful. The threatening tide of innovation was stayed; and with an occasional exception, here and there, the churches of New England held fast their integrity for another half century.

* So called, from a paper called the Manifesto, drawn up by the founders of the Brattle Street Church, in which was set forth the extent of their innovations, and the reasons of them.

WILLIAM BREWSTER.

THIS "chief father" in our Israel was born in 1564, but in what part of England is not known. Having pursued his preparatory studies, he spent some time at the University in Cambridge, where he became deeply penetrated by the puritan spirit which then very much pervaded that seat of learning. Here he was a fellow-student with the excellent John Robinson. It does not appear that he took any degree. He went to court, where he became a confidential servant or clerk, of William Davison, then Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth. In this employment, he was associated with George Cranmer and Sir Edwin Sandys, the pupils and intimate friends of the "judicious Hooker;" and both of whom became eminent in scholarship and affairs of diplomacy. Secretary Davison found young Brewster so faithful and discreet, that he trusted him in affairs of state and business of the Privy Council, more than he did any other; and in their private intercourse treated him with paternal familiarity. In 1585, when Davison was sent on an important embassy to Holland, he was attended by Brewster, who then first saw the country to which he afterwards fled as an exile for conscience sake. Three fortresses, called "cautionary towns," were placed in the hands of the Queen, as security for the repayment of money advanced by her, to enable the Hollanders to maintain their independence against the Spanish crown. The keys of the most important of these towns, Flushing, were committed by Mr. Davison to the charge of Brewster, who slept with them beneath his pillow, so carefully must these tokens of possession be guarded. In consideration of his services, the States General of Holland presented him, at his return, with a chain of gold, which his master commanded him to wear openly, as they journeyed back to the English court.

Not long after this, poor Davison, though a wise and godly man, of whom the Queen herself confessed to the Earl of Essex that, "in her kingdom she had not such another," for "sufficiency in council and matters of state," fell into ruin and disgrace. That "throned vestal," as her flatterers called her, or rather that imperious old spinster, first tricked him into drawing and sending the death-warrant of the Queen of Scots, and then made him the scape-goat to bear away into the wilderness the odium of that

detestable business. The unhappy victim of kingcraft, sacrificed to propitiate the wrath which the sophomore king of Scotland affected to feel at his mother's judicial murder, was removed from his high office of Secretary of State, imprisoned, ruined by heavy fines rigorously exacted, and banished from the court. Even in his downfall, he was universally pitied and beloved. The planet being thus disastrously dashed from its orbit, was not forsaken by its faithful satellite. Brewster followed his master into obscurity, and for a considerable period rendered him all the services in his power.

After this, Mr. Brewster retired to the north of England, among his friends. Here he lived for many years in high esteem. He was very active in promoting religion, stimulating all around him by his pious example, procuring good preachers for different places about him, and freely expending his large property in the good work. Meanwhile he was growing more and more displeased with the tyranny of the Elizabethan bishops, in silencing zealous ministers, and persecuting their devout hearers. He and others began to look more narrowly into questions of church order, and into the Romish corruptions retained in the established Church of England. Their severe afflictions led them into severe investigations; till, in 1602, they "joined themselves, by a covenant of the Lord, into a church-estate, in the fellowship of the gospel, to walk in all his ways, made known or to be made known, unto them, according to their best endeavors, whatsoever it should cost them." And indeed it cost them the loss of all things, except the confirmation of their title to a heritage in heaven. Such loss is the highest gain.

In 1606, this flock of Christ, becoming rather numerous and scattered, became two distinct bodies. In one of these churches, under the pastoral care of the venerable Richard Clifton and the illustrious John Robinson, William Brewster was made ruling elder, which office he exercised till his death; being held in "double honor," as one who "labored in word and doctrine." From their organization in 1602, his house, which was in one of the episcopal manors, was the ordinary place of meeting on the Lord's Day. "With great love he entertained them when they came, making provision for them to his great charge," so long as they were able to remain in England. But the troubles of this holy band of brethren, which had been so intolerable before, were now

heaped up till "from mole-hills they became mountains." Hunted and often taken, beset in their houses and watched night and day, forced to fly secretly from their dwellings and means of livelihood, they persisted in keeping up their Sabbath assemblies ; till, with extreme difficulty and through cruel sufferings, they escaped to Holland during 1607 and the following year. Have we not reason to fear, lest our peaceful worship, so quiet and comfortable, may run out into sluggish and nerveless sentimentalism ? How dear to our fathers must have been the religious privileges which they sought with such constancy in the face of exposure, and with the loss of all things ! How keen must have been their relish for the bread of life, and how high their enjoyment of the waters of salvation, during those covert assemblages, when every faculty of the soul was kept awake, and strung to the highest tension, by the presence of danger ! This is the only sense in which piety approves the saying : " Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant ! "

In the emigration to Holland, Mr. Brewster was the most active leader, and the severest sufferer. When a large company of the Pilgrims was taken by treachery near Boston, in Lincolnshire, the greatest loss fell upon him, and he was one of the seven who were longest detained in prison. He and Mr. Robinson were among the last that went abroad, " having tarried to help the weakest over before them." In this company there were about three hundred families.

When, at length, Mr. Brewster reached Holland, most of his property was spent. To support his large family, he was forced to resort to labors for which he had not been fitted by his former course of life. Yet he ever bore up with hearty cheer and content ; being strong in spirit, and firm in faith. During the latter part of his twelve years' sojourn at Leyden, he was in easy circumstances. He taught English to the young Dutchmen, by means of a grammar which he drew up in Latin, a language common to him and his pupils. There were many Danes and Germans among his numerous scholars, some of them belonging to families of distinction. By his method of teaching, they acquired the English speech both quickly and easily.

He was also aided by friends in setting up a printing office ; so that he was abundantly and usefully occupied. He printed most-

ly such books as the censors of the press would not allow to be published in England. Some of these were Commentaries and learned works of the famous Cartwright and others; and some were pamphlets for popular use, written against the abuses in the Church of England. No open shop was kept for the sale of these prohibited books, which were sent over, to be privately circulated in England. The British government, much incensed at the appearance of these publications, made great efforts to arrest Mr. Brewster. Sir Dudley Carleton, the British Ambassador, did his utmost to get him into the hands of the Star Chamber. But while this was going on, in 1619, Mr. Brewster was in England, whither he and Robert Cushman had gone as agents of the church at Leyden, to complete the arrangements for removing to America. It is probable that he never returned to Leyden; but remained in concealment in the north of England, till the sailing of the Mayflower, on the sixth of September, 1620.

It is needless here to recite the circumstances of this famous voyage, which has been so often and so fully described in the histories, and which wafted across the ocean a richer freight of virtue, patriotism and piety, than will ever again be borne so far in a vessel of one hundred and eighty tons. The "Mayflower" was the seed-blossom whose abounding fruit is spreading over a mighty continent, so that "the small one has become a strong nation." To them have the mercies of ancient Israel been renewed. To them hath God given "the lot of their inheritance, when they were but few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it; when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people." To the eye, any small portion of the sea appears as a level plain; but when we survey a larger tract, we discover the bold swell of the rounding surface. Thus the providence of God, scarce visible at its first day, becomes conspicuous and adorable when viewed along the tract of two hundred years.

When the colonists were landed at Plymouth, Mr. Brewster, then fifty-six years of age, still continued to act a leading part in all their civil and religious affairs. But for his office in the church, he would have been chosen their first governor: for though our fathers did not believe in the "indelible character" of ecclesiastical office, but permitted it to be laid aside for any good and sufficient reason, yet they held that no man might properly hold

offices of ruling and magistracy in the church and the commonwealth at the same time.

Great were the early hardships of the colony, under which "the old comers" lost half their number by death in the course of the first winter, and which long continued to press them severely. In all these, Mr. Brewster most willingly bore his burden with the rest. The gray-haired pilgrim, still stout of heart and limb, here betook himself to another new calling for subsistence, and became a tiller of the soil, toiling with his own hands in the field as long as he was able. No murmurings escaped him in the wilderness, — no regretful sighings for the ease and splendor of the English court, amid which he had spent his early manhood. Many times, and for many months together, he lived without bread-stuffs of any kind; faring chiefly on fish, and often scantily supplied with that; and drinking nothing but water, till just at the close of his long and laborious life.

The opposition of the bishops, and of those who were in their interest, prevented the migration of the admirable John Robinson, till the hand of death effectually intercepted his voyage to America, by transporting him to "the better land." Meanwhile the little flock at Plymouth, bereft of their "dear and loving pastor," was fed by the ministration of their worthy elder. Though he never assumed to administer the sacraments, he preached to them, while unsupplied with a regular ministry, "twice every Sabbath, and that both powerfully and profitably, to the great contentment of the hearers, and their comfortable edification." Many were converted to God by his faithful ministry.

Let those who are accustomed to image to their minds the old Puritan as a hard and rough natured creature, of stern and repulsive virtue, — let them contemplate the portrait which Governor Bradford, himself a most amiable and accomplished man, has drawn of his intimate friend, the devout elder at Plymouth: — "He was wise and discreet, and well spoken; having a grave, deliberate utterance; of a very cheerful spirit, very sociable and pleasant amongst his friends, of an humble and modest mind, of a peaceable disposition, undervaluing himself and his own abilities, and sometimes overvaluing others; inoffensive and innocent in his life and conversation, which gained him the love of those without, as well as those within. Yet he would tell them plainly of their faults and evils, both publicly and privately; but in such a

manner as was usually well taken from him. He was tender-hearted, and compassionate of such as were in misery, but especially of such as had been of good estate and rank, and were fallen into want and poverty, either for goodness and religion's sake, or by the injury and oppression of others. He would say, of all men these deserved to be most pitied." *

Whence comes the perverse fashion of depicting these Pilgrims as so many cast-iron figures, strong indeed and sturdy; but devoid of the more graceful and endearing traits of the Christian character? We seem to have no relics of them but their bones, so flinty and fossil-like. It is forgotten that they once had flesh and blood and nerves, hearts glowing with domestic affections and "unfeigned love of the brethren." They were men of warm feeling, as well as firm principle;

"Not so absolute in goodness
As to forget what human frailty is."

In his public ministration, Mr. Brewster was very plain and distinct in imparting his meaning, and stirring and rousing in his application of the truth.† He had "a singular good gift in prayer." His confessions of sin sounded the depths of the conscience and the heart; and his pleading for pardoning mercy took strong and successful hold upon the Saviour's promises. He thought it better for ministers to make their prayers rather short, and more frequent, except upon occasions of unusual solemnity and interest. "His reason was, that the heart and spirits of all, especially the weak, could hardly continue and so long stand bent, as it were, towards God, as they ought to do in that duty, without flagging and falling off."

In his appropriate office as a governor in the Church of God, for near forty years, he watched carefully over the purity of doctrine and of manners in the members; he guarded vigilantly the door of admission; he promptly met every error that arose;

* Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrims. P. 468.

† It is *some* evidence that he used proper pains to fit himself to teach the people, that he brought over with him a considerable library for those days. There is a catalogue of it in the inventory of his estate in the Old Colony Records. There were two hundred and seventy-five volumes, of which about one fourth were in the learned languages. These were valued at forty-three pounds.

and as a peace-maker, he studied to preserve quiet and order. In all these respects, God greatly blessed his labors.

For many years he lived in what is now called Leyden street in Plymouth. Toward the close of his life, he built a house in Duxbury, where he died, at the ripe age of fourscore years, on the eighteenth of April, 1644. On reaching this last stage of his long and weary pilgrimage, he gently and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, with whom his spirit rests in peace. His numerous and weeping friends eagerly ministered to his comfort while they might, "and he again recomfirmed them while he could." Thus blessedly passed away one of the foremost of those worthies to whom New England is indebted, under God, for all the best traits in her character and institutions; while nearly all that is evil among us has arisen in spite, or forgetfulness, of their principles.

The descendants of William Brewster are very numerous and widely scattered. In many of them his spirit still survives. And some of them, as they read these few pages devoted to his memory, will feel that spirit stirred within them. Grateful for such an ancestor, they will pray that the grace of God may come on them as it did on him; and prepare them, through a life of holiness and usefulness like his, to join him, not merely on the "Forefather's Rock," but on that "Rock of ages," where the ransomed of the Lord shall stand eternally secure. Let this be the reward of our task, and our humble effort shall be well repaid.

MOUNT SINAI.

IN approaching this awful "mount of God" by the route which the Israelites probably took, at their departure from Egypt, the peculiar feature of the land is the mountain ranges with which it is confusedly filled. At the last encampment of Israel, by the Red Sea, they rise directly from the plain, a gigantic gate-way to Sinai, seventy-five miles in the distance. As you enter, they close behind you, and you are embosomed in mountains, till you reach Sinai. As you look on them, the eye can detect no trace of vegetation or life. On closer examination, you find that there are succulent shrubs growing out of the clefts of the rock; and the camels clamber among the cliffs, with unwieldy agility, to secure

them. But to the cursory view, there is no life, animal or vegetable. There is no soil. The whole region of Sinai is peeled and bald. It looks as if it had been flayed; the living skin stripped completely off, laying bare the very bones of the earth. The mountains there are of bare rock, craggy, precipitous, sharp and rough; sending back a dismal echo to the voice which wakes the solitudes. The rocks at the shore by the sea, are principally limestone, succeeded by sand-stone, which gives place to the granite, as you penetrate to the central region. As the rocks are naked, they appear in their native colors; and these are all gloomy, befitting the region, and as marked as if laid on by the brush. The lime-stone was yellow, from a pale and mild color to a sombre hue, running into a dark brown. The sandstone, red, verging at times to black. The granite, gray and red, crossed or cleft in the direction of the range, by dykes of volcanic matter, of a deep green; while, in a few instances, some giant peaks of unknown rock, of dismal black, lifted themselves among their fellows. The marks of volcanic action were distinct, in the disturbed strata of the lime-stone, and in the seams and veins, which spread like net-work over the granite piles. Often, too, the more friable stone had crumbled away, and left the harder basalt, or porphyry, running like a wall along the mountain ridges. Standing among these deserts, the domain of silence, encircled by rude precipices, cleft from base to summit with volcanic fire, thrown into every form of beauty and of grandeur, colored red, yellow, brown, black and green, ever with a saddened tone, sometimes uniform, sometimes striped, you will confess it is a scene unmatched the world over.

As you pass on to Sinai, your route takes you through the Wady Mukatteb, or Valley of Writing, where are found, in greatest number, the Sinaitic inscriptions. They are traced rudely, by hands clearly unused to the work, on rock standing on the valley, where they would attract the eye of the traveller. We made out the figures of men, dogs, camels, and horses, mingled among the letters, with traces resembling the cross in various forms. They are known to be as old as the fifth century, and Prof. Beer claims to have a clue to their interpretation, and refers them to early pilgrims to Sinai. But who the pilgrims could be, who came from Egypt to Sinai, (the inscriptions are found on no other route), and who used a language and character utterly extinct, is a mystery which we must leave to be solved by time.

Three days of ordinary travel with the camel, which usually makes about twenty-three miles a day, bring you to Sinai. The mind has been somewhat prepared by passing through the mountain region, to look upon Sinai. Its silence creeps into the spirit, and its solitude and sombre hues have something sacred about them. Following the route from the sea, you reach Sinai through a frightful pass, bearing the name of Nukeb Hawy. Two colossal mountains rise before you, of red and green granite, with their bases touching each other. The sides and the base are covered with a profusion of granite masses, which had been detached from the peaks above. The seams of volcanic matter have cleft these masses to their summits. The path lies along the base; sometimes on one mountain, then on the other; undulating and winding among the boulders, for a precarious footing; while the peaks above seem to threaten the traveller with their battery of rocks. After a struggle of two hours, we win our way from the huge portals of Sinai; but find the towering walls continued on an unbroken range to the sacred mountain itself, shutting us up to Horeb. Their bases, however, recede from each other, and leave a noble plain between, Er Rahah, two miles long and half a mile in breadth. A valley comes in from the left, just at the base of Horeb, and another from the right, doubling the space, and forming, together, a noble encamping ground. As you pass on, over the plain Er Rahah, Horeb rises directly before you, with a bold, rounded summit, seven thousand French feet above the sea. A dry water-course, coming from the right, passes across the plain, at the foot of Horeb, but the mountain itself rises directly from the plain, and "may be touched." It is a granite mass, principally red, extending about three miles in length, with a narrow crested summit, the whole naked, like all the range of Sinai. The highest point, overlooking the plain Er Rahah, takes the name of Horeb; and the peak at the other extremity, the name of Gebel Mousa, the Hill of Moses.

Leaving the plain Er Rahah, and passing onward, with Horeb on the right, you reach, in a few minutes, the Convent of St. Catharine. It is tenanted by Greek monks, and is said to have been built by Justinian. The Convent walls form an irregular square, about two hundred feet on a side; and the space within is completely filled by a mosque, a church, a great number of chapels dedicated to various saints, the cells of the monks, and the rooms of the pilgrims; with a labyrinth of passages, leading confusedly

no where. The gate is walled up, and the entrance is by a window, with the aid of a windlass. The Convent is stoutly walled, but as it is built on the very bed of the water course, between Sinai and the opposite mountain, it is completely overlooked, and an inner wall has been built for the protection of its defenders. There is a noble garden attached to this Convent.

We ascend to the crest of the mountain in eighty minutes, by a path and steps, formed by the labor of the Convent; passing several natural springs in the granite rock, and having several recesses pointed out where anchorites had lived and died, serving God, in these solitudes. On the summit is a little plateau, with a fountain of water, and a cypress beside it; and hard by is the chapel of Elijah. Granite peaks towered above, shutting out all prospect of the region beyond. There is no sign of life about us, except, perhaps, a group of gazelles, we may have disturbed among the rocks. Passing down the opposite or western side of the mountain, we notice the usual signs of volcanic action. The monks point out the rock which yielded water to the rod of Moses, the mould in which Aaron cast the golden calf, and other traditional wonders. But the most marvellous thing, is a device of the monks themselves. They have several hundred slaves pertaining to the Convent, the hair of whose heads is so cut as to leave a ridge on the crown, in the form of a cross!

Passing round the front of Horeb, we gaze long upon its rugged sides, blackened by the sun, and ponder upon the doings of God. Why did he bring his people into this wilderness? The answer seems to be, in part, that they had been slaves for ages, and servitude had touched their souls. The bold, manly bearing, the independence of a desert life, they had lost in Egypt; and he brought them into the wilderness, that they might regain it. Their nature was yet in fetters, and unequal to the task of conquering Palestine; and he nurtures them among the mountains, and in the deserts, until the fearful and enervated serfs, who came forth from Egypt, died in the wilderness, and a race sprung up who never had known slavery, and were trained by the hardihood of their wandering life, to the conquest of the land promised to their fathers. Another reason was, that they went forth from Egypt, without law, without formal worship, with nothing to regulate the vast interests of the host of Israel, but the guidance of nature. They were to be a nation existing for centuries, and blessing the

world forever. It was needful, then, to combine the elements of national existence, to rear the frame-work of society, to found institutions which should create and cherish a national spirit; and above all, to give them a code of laws, emanating from God, and to regulate and ordain the mode of his worship. Until this was done, they were a multitude, and not a nation. It was done, and done well, for it yet remains wherever you can find a Jew wandering over the earth; and the impress of Sinai on his brow, has outlasted captivity, oppression, penury and shame.

And what scene could be better adapted for the communication between heaven and earth, than Sinai? Where better could God speak, and man listen? In Egypt, there is beauty,—the beauty of the river and verdant plain. But it is a beauty uniform, tame and insipid; and its tameness insinuates itself into the life and character of the Egyptians. God led his people forth to the mountains. He ushered the way by his presence; he marked the track by miracles; he brought them among the outworks of Sinai, where the solemn silence, and the grandeur of nature, might awaken their sluggish spirits to strong harmony with his works. He led them through the portals of Sinai, and they encamped before the mount. Yes! These mountains, in their lone grandeur, were meet to be the dwelling-place of God. These granite barriers were the walls of his temple; and this Horeb was the altar of his sanctuary, worthy of God. These summits are silent now, and lift their brows high up heavenward, where the clear air grows dim from distance, with no voice to waken praise. But once they were quick with teeming life. The tribes of Israel thronged this plain; and the crags and sides of these barriers were filled with awe-stricken men. They had sanctified themselves, and stood there to hearken unto God. And the Lord descended upon the mount, in a thick cloud; “and mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. . And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses; speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”

“And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, — and the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire.” “And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai, with the two tables of testimony in his hand,” that the face of Moses shone, and he veiled his face, while he spake with Israel.

The lofty peaks rocked upon their everlasting base, for here it was that God spake with man. But now the solitude is hushed, the thunder is unheard, the lightnings flash no more, the voice of God is mute. We gaze up to the crest of Sinai; the sun which sinks behind its ridge long before it sets, though hidden to the eye, throws its golden light upon the summit; and there, on the topmost pinnacle of Sinai, some adventurous hand hath planted a cross. There it stands, in the clear heavens, surmounting Sinai, in a flood of radiance. Beautiful emblem! Calvary piled upon Sinai, — the cross resting on the basis of the law, — has quelled its thunders and its lightnings, and stands forth in glory, to tell us of a Saviour crucified to redeem us from the bitter curse.

THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

We have had occasion to review several of the back numbers of the Christian Examiner; and while we have seen some things to admire, we have seen other things which give us pain. We write in musing and marvelling mood, rather than with disposition to controversy. We hope we have philosophy, not to say candor and Christian charity, enough to appreciate excellences, as well as to discover defects.

The Unitarian denomination is divided, though the lines are not always clearly drawn, into pantheistic Unitarians, and Unitarians of the old school. The latter class comprises the great majority of Unitarian clergymen; including, we suppose, most of the writers for the Christian Examiner. This class, we think, has somewhat improved in its theology, within a few years. They manifest less of the negative and destructive spirit, and more of a disposition to preserve and combine into a system, the scattered fragments of Christianity which remain to them. Their writings, though still

sadly deficient, have more of an evangelical savor. The Examiner, during the last two or three years, has contained several earnest defences of Christianity, as a supernatural, miraculous religion, in opposition to Strauss, Parker, and others. The development of open, pantheistic infidelity, within their own denomination, though anticipated and predicted by others, as the natural fruit of excessive liberalism, has startled and done them good. We do think that there is a tendency among the more serious Unitarians, who were hardly conscious of the downward current of their principles, to draw back from the awful cataract of atheism, into which some of their number seem to have plunged; and from which the denomination, so far as it has escaped, has escaped with difficulty. We like to record the improvement of the one class, while we express our horror of the abysses which have engulfed the other. Unitarianism still contains great errors, which, as we fear, will be fatal to many. But, to our apprehension, the difference between the old school and the new, — presuming that the old really believes in Jesus Christ as the *only* begotten son of God, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and *raised* from the dead on the third day, and that the new rejects revelation entirely, — is just the difference between Christianity in an imperfect form, and rank, though covert, infidelity.

But perhaps our readers will dissent from the opinion that Unitarianism has improved, when they consider some of the things which follow.

Among the causes of our marvelling, is the disposition which is manifested by some of the writers of the Examiner, to escape from the trammels of Scripture topics in the pulpit, and from the tediousness of too much public worship. There is a singular article in the November number for 1846, by O. D., — understood to be Rev. Orville Dewey, D.D., — “On subjects for the pulpit.” The writer seems to think it wearisome and common-place, to devote both the morning and the evening discourses, to subjects peculiarly religious. He would have the morning exercises chiefly devotional, and the sermon adapted to religious impression. In the evening, he would throw off these fetters, and discourse at large, upon more general topics; either “with, or without, a text, as might be convenient.” He “would propose a series of discourses on Natural Theology.” He would have lectures upon “the history of the church, — the biographies of good men;” — a course on

“the evidences of Christianity,” and “the character of its records ;” — a course on “the much abused and dishonored science of theology.” “In the last place, on a variety of other subjects, which may come under the occasional notice of the pulpit, and yet, which require, some of them, at least, a liberty in the discussion, not altogether consonant, perhaps, with a season of solemn worship, — with a season, that is to say, where worship and meditation are, or ought to be, regarded as chief ends.”

The subjects to which he now refers, are the following: “The moral principles of trade ;” “the condition of society ;” “national duties and dangers ;” “the use to be made of extraordinary events ;” and others of the like character. “A series of discourses, too, might be delivered on the professions ; and upon the moral responsibilities of magistrates and legislators.” Sometimes also, he would have “a discourse upon a remarkable book,” whose influence is either very pernicious or valuable. “We have heard a sermon,” he says, “on the imprisonment of Silvio Pellico ; and of others, on that remarkable and most interesting engraving of Retsch, entitled, ‘The Game of Life.’” Since last summer, we understand that several Unitarian sermons have been preached on or against “The Evangelical Alliance.” *

Now we do not object to the discussion of some of these subjects in the pulpit, particularly, some of those first mentioned. Natural Theology, the evidences of Christianity, the science of Theology — these are topics, if properly managed, not inappropriate to the Sabbath, nor incongruous with worship. But the idea of setting apart the afternoon service to discussions on all sorts of subjects, so conducted as to be “not altogether consonant, perhaps, with a season of solemn worship,” — in other words, discussions suitable, we suppose, as articles for the Christian Examiner, “with, or *without*, a text,” — this is matter for grave reflection, both upon the spirit and the tendencies of Unitarian religion. We have heard considerable Unitarian preaching : in former days, for years together, we scarcely heard any other ; and we must say, though there were exceptions, that there was a certain worldliness and heartlessness, or, as we used to feel, godlessness, in the sermons, — at least, for we would not be uncharitable, a singular want of that earnest,

* One Unitarian clergyman, of Boston, anticipating O. D.’s advice, carried into his pulpit a *bird’s claw*, as a substitute for a text!

deep, experimental, tender piety, which good people call "an unction from the Holy One." It was this unsabbath-like, unreligious, (if we may use such words,) mode of preaching, which made us feel, quite as much as the erroneous doctrines delivered, that there was something radically wrong in the system. We have heard serious Unitarians express a similar sentiment. They are not fed; the deep wants of the soul are not met; they are not assisted by such instructions, in drawing nigh to God.

Whether this Lyceum style of preaching will be adopted by the denomination generally, for a part of the Sabbath, more than it has been heretofore, time must show. We had supposed that the better class of Unitarians, we mean those who believe in Jesus Christ as the *only* Son of God, were becoming more spiritual and evangelical in their pulpit ministrations.

Unitarians seem inclined to assume a regard, above all others, for excellence of character. Dr. Gannett has somewhere said, that a supreme regard for character is the distinguishing feature of Unitarianism. We quote from memory, and will not vouch for the words, though we cannot be mistaken as to the sentiment. See on this subject also, an address delivered before the Association of the Alumni of the Cambridge Divinity School, July, 1846, by William O. Peabody, D. D. Mr. Peabody says: "It is one of the chief advantages of that body of Christians with which we are connected, that they insist on character, in its wholeness and harmony, as the essential thing." Not that they lay more stress on it practically, but because, if we understand him, they do not lay much stress upon any thing else. "This idea of the supreme importance of character, is the substance of Unitarianism." "If, therefore, the Unitarian sect is passing by, it conveys the glad tidings that its warfare is accomplished, and its work is done; in other words, that the world is receiving this great truth of the transcendent worth of character, and need no longer to have it pressed upon them by an active and earnest party." The same sentiment may be often found among writers of this denomination. Honor to whom honor is due. We have read many beautiful and eloquent appeals from leading Unitarian writers, in behalf of the moral virtues. Sincerity, purity, charity, domestic affections, philanthropy and piety found glowing advocates in Channing, Ware, Greenwood, and others. These gentlemen had a high appreciation of refinement, amiability, integrity and honor. We admire

much that they have written, and doubt the reality of a Christian character where these virtues are not manifested. It may be true, also, that Orthodoxy has sometimes dwelt more upon the substantial of godliness, than upon its outward adornments. While we insist upon faith, communion with God, and holy living, something might be gained by a more prominent and frequent presentation of all those excellences which give a charm to social life, and render Christianity absolutely beautiful in every feature.

But we must look a little at the Unitarian assumption. Do our liberal friends imagine, that the Evangelical denominations are comparatively regardless of character? Is there a virtue inculcated in the New Testament which our pulpits do not enforce? For ourselves, we must say that we have never heard nor read more earnest exhortations to "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are of good report," than we have from preachers of our own denomination. We hold sin in all its forms as infinitely odious, the greatest evil in the universe, and more to be avoided, if we could separate it from its consequences, than the punishment of hell itself. We also believe holiness of heart and life, to be of more value to immortals than all the rewards of heavenly bliss which come in connection therewith. In this respect, we attach supreme value to character. It is the end of Christianity, as it respects the individual man. He is to be transformed in the renewing of his mind into the image of Christ, who is the pattern of all goodness. He is to strive after the attainment of all the imitable perfections of his Lord. We wish to see *the man* completely developed in the beauty of holiness, so that being unblamable, and unreprouvable, having a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, and exhibiting every trait of Christian greatness and loveliness, he shall grow up into the stature of a perfect one in Christ.

Where then is the difference between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism on the subject of character? Why does the Unitarian imagine, that it is a supreme regard to character which distinguishes his denomination from all other forms of religion? We have a threefold answer to these questions. Unitarianism is the religion of culture. Orthodoxy is the religion of redemption. Unitarianism proceeds to the formation of character without first

attempting to lay the foundation. This was the great defect of the younger Dr. Ware's little book on "The Formation of Christian Character." The title of the book indicates well its contents. It is a treatise upon the *formation* of christian character. Orthodoxy occupies itself first, and in addressing one class of men, chiefly, in laying the *foundation*. This is repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, — the only foundation on which a justly proportioned Christian character can be built.

Again, the Unitarian seems to place his confidence for salvation chiefly upon what he is, upon what he has done, upon what he has made himself, upon what he has become. The Orthodox believer, while seeking a complete Christian development in the renewed man, builds his hope of salvation, not on merit as the *ground* of acceptance, but wholly on the mercy of God in Christ.

Again, with the Orthodox, the first element of a good character is godliness, or love and obedience to God. Where this exists, the virtues of the second table will follow. With the Unitarian, the refinements of civilization, kind offices between man and man, and moral improvement seem to have too nearly usurped the place of that supreme love to God which is the first element of goodness.

From some things in the Examiner, we are led to believe that the Unitarian *ideal* of character, is decidedly defective. For ourselves, as we cannot conceive of goodness without godliness, nor of godliness without God, no more can we believe, that there is any Christianity without Christ; or a truly good man, who, understanding the religion of Jesus, rejects it. We are led to this remark, particularly by an article in the Christian Examiner for September, 1845, entitled "Blanco White — Rationalism," by O. D., the same writer to whom we have already alluded.

Mr. White was an infidel. "His autobiography shows," says Dr. Dewey, "that there may be good and devout men under the greatest diversities of honest conviction." His outbreaks upon the Church and Priesthood could be called, "if you please, the infirmities of a noble mind." "*It was* a noble mind. This *was* a good man." The emphatic Italics belong to the text. But let us see some of the characteristics of this good man. "In the course of his life," says O. D., "he passed from the extreme of Romanism to the extreme of Rationalism." "He died believing in God but without any belief in a future life." "His invectives against authority, Church and Priesthood, often seem to us as more querulous than philosophical," — "to

a certain extent indiscriminate and unjust." "These wholesale denunciations of all churches and their clergy, as full of pretension, craft and cruelty, though they may gratify a certain class of persons, will give pleasure, we believe, to no wise man." "Mr. Gallaudet, — a man whose name we cannot pass without expressing for him the sincerest respect and esteem, is severely censured for a dogmatic teaching of children in his 'Book of the Soul.'" "He inveighs much against what he calls Bibliolatry, the worship of the Book," that is, the Bible. "He goes farther, and calls in question the very ideal and teaching of the Master." He thinks the text: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned into the likeness of his glorious body," "the source of many errors, monachism, bodily maceration, and an irrational contempt of the body." "Christian humility and martyrdom, too, come under Mr. White's censure. Alas! we said, as we went on with the Memoir, every thing is to go down before this determined criticism. Humility, he says, is the virtue of slaves, and familiarity with the lash was the true preparation of the heroes of martyrdom." "We understand Mr. White, too, as objecting to prayer; that is, to prayer considered as a direct petition." At length this remarkable person, when approaching the end of his mortal pains and strifes, quits the last hold upon positive Christianity. The belief in a God alone remains to him. "He dies and gives no sign of Christian hope." After this account of Mr. White, given under the flippant and often eloquent pen of O. D., it sounds oddly enough, to hear the same writer eulogising the subject of his notice as a *noble* mind, — as emphatically a good man, — a man of a most affectionate nature, and of an unconquerable love of truth. His wholesale and indiscriminate denunciations and out-pourings of bitterness upon Christian professors, "the noble army of martyrs" not excepted, is to us, we confess, a singular proof of "*his affectionate nature*;" while his rank infidelity, expressed not without a liberal interlarding, as O. D. himself says, "of the old pagan scorn," appears no less remarkable as the manifestation of *an unconquerable love of truth*. We could not but wonder, from any thing presented in the article, why the writer should say that "for the *character* of Mr. White, we have the highest veneration and regard; nay, we will confess it, an affectionate and tender feeling." He indeed makes a distinction, as charity requires, between character and opinion. But is not

the *spirit* of a man an element, — ay, the very essence, of his character? And ought a man of such a spirit, expressing pagan scorn for Christianity, and maligning indiscriminately its professors, to be labelled a noble character? Is it so certain that bad opinions never spring from a bad heart; or that the Saviour contradicted truth when he said: “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine?” The distinction between character and opinion in this case reminds us of an explanation we once heard of the parable of the wheat and the tares; that, at the judgment, “God would cast the sins of the wicked into a furnace of fire, but receive the sinner into heaven.”

In many of their discoursings upon charity, Unitarians seem to be untrue to themselves. It is a mawkish, wordy, unmeaning charity, which appears to spring quite as much from certain “recorded opinions” on the subject, as from deep convictions at the moment of utterance. And we would seriously inquire of our Unitarian friends, whether in many of their remarks concerning Straussism, Parkerism, Putnamism, and the like, they may not be really, though unconsciously, abusing their own convictions.

But Unitarian charity is not always excessive, or fawning in *all* directions. A single sentence or two, at the close of this article on Blanco White, may possibly furnish a clue to the writer’s reverence and affection for him. “There is,” says he, “an entirely different direction of thought with regard to this work, which we could wish to see thoroughly followed out. The value of its protests against the popular forms of Christianity ought to be carefully appreciated; and we hope that some competent hand will undertake the task.” Mr. White heartily hated Evangelical Christianity. And O. D. has said, that *he* “would rather be an infidel than a Calvinist, a strict Calvinist of the old school.”

In an article by H. W. B., or Rev. Mr. Bellows of New York, in the Examiner for November, 1845, the character of Mr. White is highly eulogised, while many of his opinions are disapproved. It appears that he rejected “Romanism and Christianity together;” that he concealed his opinions “during seven years of total unbelief,” and continued all this time “to exercise the office of a priest,” “striving to convince himself that he may honestly profess Christianity in an esoteric way, — using his office only for good purposes, and carefully avoiding any breach of morals.” Have our Unitarian friends lost their reason? Surely they

cannot palliate such barefaced hypocrisy? Shades of the martyrs! is this magnanimity! Is this nobleness of character! No wonder poor White scoffed at men who chose death, rather than to falsify their convictions. But the same writer goes on to say: "It is impossible for any one who reads these volumes to doubt that he was governed by *the sincerest love of truth* in every change of sentiment he made." And again; "Who does not honor Blanco White more in his spiritual integrity and shattered faith, than though with a competent faith he had wanted a ray only of his moral brightness." But is it spiritual integrity and moral brightness "to exercise the office," of a Christian minister "during seven years of total unbelief?" or is it falsehood and hypocrisy? We have read these articles with grief and pain. Is this, we exclaimed, Unitarianism? Will Dr. Gannett, and other dignitaries of that denomination, which assumes for its distinguishing superiority over other sects, a supreme regard for *character*, endorse such sentiments? We answer, No! We do not believe that Unitarian clergymen or laymen generally, will justify downright hypocrisy, indulged for a long series of years, though its robes should happen to be worn by one in a transition state from Romanism to Unitarianism. We must think, that some gentlemen of this sect have placed themselves before the community in a false position; being led on by the erroneous principles of charity they had previously adopted, and by the singular strength of their prejudices. We would not judge of all Unitarians by the sentiments expressed in these articles. But we put it to them to say, Whether they are not perverting men's consciences, and breaking down the moral sense of the community? Especially, Whether they are not making it easy for the Voltaires, and Rousseaus, and Paines, to say nothing of the Parkers and Emersons of our own time, to minister as holy men and true at the altars of that Jesus whose miraculous religion they utterly reject, and whose high claims are despised by them? And what assurance can we have that the endorsers of Mr. White are not themselves preaching Christianity *in an esoteric way*? That is, if we understand it, preaching Christianity in public, and holding infidelity in secret, or confessing it only to the initiated? Charity is great. It is the noblest of the virtues; but there are such things as truth, as honesty, as integrity; without which no one can be a good man or a Christian.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

PRAYER is mighty and prevalent. "No duty is more often commanded, or more highly commended." "Cold pleaders prove to be cold speeders," said an old Puritan, who was no stranger to the great "avails" of "the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man." In this grand struggle of the heart, God is the strength of his people. His invitations to the sinking soul are wonderful. "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." When Jacob grappled with the angel of the covenant, and wrestled through the weary night and till the breaking day, it was by his grasp that he drew from Omnipotence the might which enabled him to cope with Omnipotence.

The unbelieving mind, in its various moods of presumption and despair, may question the efficacy of prayer, and start many difficulties as to its utility.

It may be suggested, that God is too great and high to be reached by our petitions; when it should be considered that it is one of the most remarkable proofs of his greatness, that of so many millions of sincere suppliants, not one is unanswered.

It has been objected, that God, perfectly knowing all our wants, needs not to be told of them; and being perfectly good, needs not to be entreated to supply them. But is it not a greater mercy, if we are made to know them ourselves, and are thus made ready to feel the whole benefit of his bounty?

Sometimes the tempted soul is inclined to feel, that it is too sinful and polluted to speak to infinite Holiness. And truly, this thought may hush us into silence; but only till we turn away our eyes from self and sin, to the beholding of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. Says the judicious Hooker: "Looking inward, we are stricken dumb; looking upward, we speak and prevail."

The devil, in trying to keep the miserable spirit from praying, will suggest that it is a vain attempt to turn the mind of an unchangeable Being or to alter the course of his eternal decrees. But He, who has had all things eternally in his sight, has had the prayers of his children eternally in view, with all their sweet, persuasive power. The prayer He is now answering, He has always heard.

But it matters not how many theoretical difficulties may be thrown up to embarrass our prayers, the practical Christian feels

them not. Be they imaginings of a corrupt and rebellious nature, or falsehoods begotten directly by "the father of lies," they vanish at once in the moment of peril or the hour of anguish. Terror and sorrow will enforce us to pray. When the soul is seized with dread, when the heart is broken with bereavement, there is a resistless impulse to call on God for help and pity. A scoffing Volney will tremble and pray, amid the horrors of the tempest and threatened shipwreck. A blaspheming Paine, on that dying bed whose horrors chased away his infidel crew of disciples, will utter, in shrieks of agony, that name he had so often cursed. At such times, no man thinks of the subtle objections which may be arrayed against calling on the name of the Lord.

The man of prayer does not require the knotted scourges of fear and trouble to drive him to this employment. It is dear to his heart, since first, at his soul's new birth in grace, the breath of supplication was breathed into him; and he who had been spiritually dead "became a living soul." "Behold, he prayeth!" These are the words in which the Holy Ghost announced to the astonished prophet, the conversion of that bloody persecutor, Saul of Tarsus. With many "vain repetitions," that zealous Pharisee had offended the ear of Heaven. But never, till now he is asking in submissive penitence: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—has he ever PRAYED, in the strict sense of that sacred word. No unconverted man ever prayed in spirit and in truth. But when born again, from that hour, his life is a new life; it is a life of prayer. Prayer is the vital breath of spiritual existence. "It is the first thing wherewith a righteous life beginneth, and the last wherewith it doth end."

This free access to the throne of grace is the highest privilege which can be conferred on creatures in this world. It is the way to heaven. It is next to heaven. It has in it much of heaven. Thus to confide in God, thus to disburden the heavy-laden soul, thus to bring the Lord of angels to our help, is, in this world, the chief among the joys of salvation. It opens a communication with the celestial City of God; for prayer is the arrow, with the message wrapped around it; and faith is the bow. And if the bow be strong, and strongly drawn, the winged missive is sped at once over the walls of the heavenly Zion. This hallowed archery is beautifully described in one of the "Emblems" of Francis Quarles:

"Dart up thy soul in groans ! thy secret groan
 Shall pierce His ear, shall pierce His ear alone :
 Dart up thy soul in vows ! thy sacred vow
 Shall find him out where Heaven alone shall know :
 Dart up thy soul in sighs ! thy whispering sigh
 Shall rouse His ears, and fear no listener nigh :
 Shoot up the bosom-shafts of thy desire,
 Feathered with faith, and double-forked with fire ;
 And they will hit !—Fear not where Heaven bids come,
 Heaven's never deaf, but when man's heart is dumb."

After all, the grand warrants and encouragements to prayer are found in the exceeding great and precious promises which are made to the petitioner through Christ. These promises are the covenants wherewith God has graciously bound himself to his suppliant creatures. And prayer is the suing out of these inviolable bonds through the intercession of our "advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Take this one example : "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Take with this, the comment of a good old Puritan divine : "It is as firm as Heaven can make it; it hath a double asseveration upon it,—'Of a truth, of a truth, I say unto you,' to you, whatsoever your case and condition, your trials and circumstances. 'Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name,' let your request be ever so large, let it grasp at all my Word hath promised, that my blood hath purchased, that my righteousness hath obtained, that my hand can bestow, or my heart can give. My 'name' hath an infinite authority with the Father. It is the door of every blessing, the way of every mercy, and the knocker at the gate of Heaven. If thy request be stamped with my name, thy plea will be granted in the court above. Yes, plead my person as your Mediator, my blood as your atonement, my righteousness as your hope, my power as your support. With these pleas, 'ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' Fear not, the Father will give it you. *He hath none else to bestow it upon but you.* The angels do not need it, the saints in glory are in full possession of it, and hardened sinners do not ask for it; therefore, he will give it unto you."

To whom else should he give it? Christian reader, lay hold of such sure promises as these, and learn the power of prayer.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS AND THINGS.

THE COLLEGES.—One of the most striking features of the times, is the munificence which, within a very few years, has been showered upon our higher seminaries of learning. Some twenty years ago, there was a disposition to depreciate them, in favor of common schools and instruction in practical science. The study of the classics, so long and so justly held to be the best means of mental discipline, was in danger of being abandoned by acclamation. Within that period, there has been a great and almost silent change of opinion on this subject, and the colleges and the classics have risen higher in the public estimation, than at any time since the days of our learned and godly fathers. Thus Bowdoin College, one of our oldest and best institutions, which had well nigh become the prey of Unitarianism, has recently, by a sort of treaty stipulation highly honorable to all parties, been ceded completely back to the Orthodox interest, in connection with a generous increase of its endowments, to the amount of fifty thousand dollars.—Harvard College, already richly provided with the means of instruction in other branches, has very lately received a splendid gift of like amount, for the purposes of practical science. Would that a sense of justice might so far obtain in the management of this child of our fathers' fondest love, as to relax the cords of "anti-sectarian and liberal bigotry," in which it has been bound so long!—Within a few weeks, the College at Amherst, which last winter obtained from the legislature a grant of twenty-five thousand dollars, has received double that sum, chiefly through the bounty of a former generous benefactor, and enthusiastic friend of religious education. This institution, now free of debt, stands on a basis of support firmer than it ever had before. We have noticed with pleasure, that, at several recent anniversaries of important benevolent societies, the secretaries and all the speakers were Amherst men. We allude to this circumstance, not as intimating any superiority in the graduates of this institution over those of our other seats of science, which we would be very far from doing,—but as one token that Amherst College is in a good measure fulfilling the hopes and designs of its pious founders.—Of the ample benefactions made to Williams College, we need not speak further than to refer to the source from whence they have sprung, a heart where "liberal sentiments," in a high and honest sense, prevail.—Others of our higher seminaries, in different parts of the land, have been helped in their good work, by Christian generosity. For the men who have thus invested a portion of their wealth for the benefit of mankind, there is one strong text of Scripture: "The liberal *deviseth* liberal things; and by liberal things shall he *stand*." Let the people of God fervently pray for our colleges, that with their enlarged means of usefulness and influence, they may be more than ever consecrated "to Christ and the Church."

DR. TYLER'S LETTER TO DR. BUSHNELL.—This pamphlet, called out by the "Discourses on Christian Nurture," is written both ably

and kindly. While it breathes an amiable spirit toward Dr. Bushnell, it makes shocking bad work of the theology of his little book. The cask is overset and emptied, the heads stove in, the hoops knocked off, and the staves flung all over the lot. That cask must be hard to mend. It will be easier to make a new one. Many of our best divines, and soundest publications, have severely condemned the greater part of Dr. Bushnell's "Discourses." Others, as good and as Orthodox, have warmly commended them, though obliged to own that they contain ambiguous and unsafe expressions. Instead of seeking to reconcile these conflicting views of brethren, we will look at the impression made in other quarters by the "Discourses on Christian Nurture." A writer in Pennsylvania, believed to be Dr. Nevin, a decided enemy of Puritanism, says, in a review of the work: "The current view of Christian nurture, as *opposed* by Dr. Bushnell, has been the product, to a great extent undoubtedly, of the Puritan theory of religion." No wonder, then, if Rationalist speculators should be distractedly in love with their Hartford friend. His work is highly applauded by Rev. F. D. Huntington, in the Monthly Religious Magazine, a Unitarian publication of the old-fashioned sort, as we understand. Mr. Huntington, referring to Dr. Bushnell's writings in the New Englander, says that they are of the latitudinarian spirit and tendency, "notwithstanding certain *clauses of reservation* thrown in here and there to conciliate the sect, and keep up an apparent consistency with modern Calvinism." Then speaking of the "Discourses on Christian Nurture," he says: "The whole tone and argument of the book, are a *direct refutation* of the dogmas of Calvinism, and, in the main features, are a *very interesting presentation of Unitarian views*; and this effect is but feebly modified by some such clauses of reservation as we have referred to, at the conclusion. Not that Mr. Bushnell, is conscious of tampering with the honesty of his convictions. He is only wanting, at present, in that high and unusual measure of personal independence, freedom from partisan and educational biases, or else the power of logical inference, necessary to bring out the principles of his own reasoning, to their practical, ultimate, inevitable results. He virtually abolishes the dogmas of Total Depravity, Election, Instantaneously Completed Conversion, and then with singular simplicity remarks that, notwithstanding, we must not fail to believe them." Leaving this editor, we now turn to him of the Christian World, a Unitarian periodical of the transcendental stamp. His paper of the fifth of June, printed before complaint had been made in any quarter as to the orthodoxy of Dr. Bushnell's book, contains a highly complimentary notice of it, in which he says, that Dr. Bushnell "denies the necessity of holding to those mysterious influences which are said to operate on the adult to convert him to God." He gives more than a column of extracts "in confirmation," as he says, of his "oft repeated declaration—that Unitarianism is continually at work, modifying very essentially the theology of the age." In the World of July third, the editor says, that Dr. Bushnell has, "in his exceeding good nature, furnished Unitarians with a manual in harmony with their own views." He then makes a serious proposition to purchase from the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, the copy-right of the work, and the bal-

ance of the first edition ; promises to sell the future editions at half the cost of this ; and offers to print a reasonable amount of explanation by way of preface, if the Committee of Publication "shall feel anxious to explain the reasons which have induced them to part with so *extraordinary* and dangerous a production."—A work thus reprobated by a large part of the evangelical community, and thus welcomed by the whole body of the Unitarians of all sorts, can hardly be thought a *safe* book for Orthodox Sabbath Schools. Accordingly the Publishing Committee of the Massachusetts Society, in deference to the views of their brethren, have voted to suspend the sale of the work.

EXERCISES IN HEBREW GRAMMAR.—This book, by Professor H. B. Hackett, of Newton, in addition to the usual matter in books of the kind, contains selections from the Greek Scriptures to be translated into Hebrew, with all the needful instruction and help. The author is one of those dear men whom to know is to love, and whoso loves him, must needs feel amiably toward his book. If acquainted with Greek, it will enable the student to make that acquisition a stepping-stone to the knowledge of the Hebrew. The Greek "selections," written originally by Hebrews, and tinged with the peculiarities of their mother tongue, are well adapted to be rendered into that ancient speech. This is a book for such as aspire, with good old Governor Bradford, to "see the oracles of God in their native beauty."

CLERICAL POWER.—The Oberlin Quarterly Review, edited by Mr. Mahan and Mr. Finney, contained in the May number, an article entitled "Authority, a Prerogative of the Ministerial Office." It is a rough piece of work, written against demagogues, agrarians, socialists, and levellers in church or state. Against these it stiffly maintains the prerogative of the ministry, asserting "that the pastor stands in Christ's stead to the flock, and hence occupies a position of authority ;" and that he is "the servant of *God*," and not "the servant of the *people*." The writer assigns as his reason for urging these views, that they "may be of service in checking the progress of the errors, fanaticism, and wild vagaries, with which the nominal church abounds at the present time!" "We urge our doctrine," he says, "as a check to error, a bridle to fanaticism, and an obstacle to religious anarchy !" We have long made it a point not to be astonished at any monsters generated by the rich mud of Oberlin ; or we might have been a little surprised to see the doctrine of priestly domination starting out of it, like the frogs which Herodotus describes as produced by the prolific slime of the Nile, the upper half pawing and croaking, while the nether portion is still in the miry state. But as Oberlin has been a hot-bed for spawning out so many frogs of fanaticism, it is about right that it should hatch out at least one crocodile to devour them again, before they get to be as numerous as the reptiles which pestered Pharoah. On the whole, it is not so very strange, that they who have waked the tempest of anarchy should seek shelter from their own whirlwinds in the dead calm of ecclesiastical despotism. It is thus that confusion usually cures itself. The men whose principles and measures threatened to subvert the churches and the ministry, are just the men to rush through the tumult they have created, and come out at the opposite extreme.

THE CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM.—We cannot but feel some regret that the General Association of Massachusetts laid aside the plan of assembling a synod of the churches next year at Cambridge, to celebrate the second centennial of the adoption of the Platform of Church Government. There may never be another such opportunity for settling questions and doubts as to its lesser details, and of reaffirming the great doctrines of that famous monument of the wisdom and piety of our fathers. If nothing more shall be attempted, we hope that the pastors and churches will heed the advice of the General Association, and commemorate the day by appropriate services within the bounds of each congregation. In so doing, they may derive some assistance from the article on the "Progress and Prospects of Congregationalism," which we give them in this number of the Observatory, and which is furnished by one who has diligently improved rare opportunities for collecting the facts. To such as may wish to obtain full information in regard to our early history, we recommend a work in three stout volumes, printed at London for the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and entitled "Historical Memorials relating to the Independents or Congregationalists," by Benjamin Hanbury. This work, with almost two thousand closely printed pages, is a vast treasury of matters relative to the subject down to the restoration of Charles II. It demonstrates the true theory of the Church of God, as stated by the excellent Henry Jacob, in 1612:—"Where each ordinary congregation giveth their free consent in their own government, there certainly each congregation is an entire and independent body-politic, and indued with power immediately under and from Christ, as every proper church is, and ought to be."

INFLUX OF FOREIGNERS. — The extent and population of our country are such, that we might take up and absorb a multitude of immigrants each year, without producing any perceptible effect upon our national character and institutions. The natural increase of the population is large enough to prevent the undue preponderance of any ordinary admixture of foreign elements; and would in course of time thoroughly assimilate and domesticate them. But when the immigration becomes so excessive as it is now, we are liable to be denationalized by these multitudes whose habits and religion are hostile to our free institutions. We are in danger of being swamped by the surges of this flood-tide of pauperism and popery. The hand of God is in this thing. What can it mean? But a few years since, we were in high security. We pleased ourselves with the flattering thought, that we were getting along so finely, and converting the world so fast! This is a state of feeling which is fatal to deep and devoted piety; and the Lord is causing this wild tide to roll in upon us, that we may be compelled to pull for life, and bend to the oars with the energy of desperation. We may no longer fold our hands, and float pleasantly and lazily with the current. It is the warning voice of Providence: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation!" By the divine blessing on strenuous efforts, we must save these vast masses of strangers; or we must sink with them into that vortex of popular anarchy, leading down to the dark depths of popish despotism, which threatens to engulf the hopes of our country.